

Tony Thinking Aloud xxvii

It is good to know that students at university are to be home for Christmas. This season which is so important to share with family and friends.

Have you ever thought why Christmas is the most important day of the year? Folk always want to be together, not New Year's Day, that is a kind of optional extra.

Christmas evokes family and friendship, parties, celebrations, remembering one another (like the Pandemic has made us reflect). It also has a feeling of focus on peace, peace everywhere.

Most would know it is about the birth of Jesus, but for many that is about all – so why celebrate?

Have you started buying the presents? Perhaps more will be coming online. When I was a child I had one present from my parents and a stocking (not a pillow case, my mother told me if Santa could not get it in the stocking he would leave it at the side!) Now it seems necessary to give many gifts to everyone!

Why the gifts? Because Jesus is God's greatest gift to us all.

So regardless of what we think we keep Christmas. I asked Steve, a good mate of mine, who is emphatic that he does not believe in anything and would never send a card – what do you do at Christmas? He told me he goes with a friend to help provide Christmas Dinner to folk who would otherwise be alone.

Somewhere there is a Christmas Spirit in everyone! It is good politicians realise the importance of family and friends at this time when thinking of students at University.

Some of that feeling needs to remain with us as the pandemic may make our love and care even more demanding. Jesus helps us to recall at Christmas the need for

peace, friendship, remembering others, being grateful'. May we know the support which God gives us at Christmas , not just on one day but all the time...